

What is claimed:

1. A method for controlling a recloser for a three-phase electrical power line, comprising:
  - monitoring the three phases of the power line;
  - determining which of the three phases have an associated fault; and
  - opening the phases on the power line that have the associated fault.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the fault occurs when a protection element on the recloser enters pickup.
3. The method according to claim 1, wherein determining which of the three phases have an associated fault comprises comparing a line current through each of the three phases to a predetermined current, a fault occurring on one of the phases when the line current on the associated phase exceeds the predetermined current.
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein determining which of the three phases have an associated fault comprises:
  - detecting a fault in at least one of the three phases;
  - starting a countdown timer associated with each faulted phase; and
  - determining the faults still present after one of the associated countdown timers has expired.
5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the fault occurs when a protection element on the recloser enters pickup.
- 20 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein opening the phases on the power line that have the associated fault comprises opening only one phase if only one fault is determined, the only one phase being associated with the fault, opening only two

phases if only two faults are determined, the only two phases being associated with the two faults, and opening all three phases if three faults are determined.

7. A recloser control system for a three-phase electrical power line, comprising:

5                   a recloser having three poles, each pole corresponding to an associated one of the three phases of the power line and being capable of opening or closing the associated phase of the power line; and

10                  a recloser controller coupled to the recloser for controlling the setting of the poles depending on the line current appearing in the phases on the power line, one pole opening the associated phase of the power line if the line current on only the associated phase exceeds an associated predetermined current, two poles opening the two associated phases of the power line if the line current on only the two associated phases exceeds an associated predetermined current, and all poles opening all the associated phases of the power line if the line current on three phases exceeds the associated predetermined current.

15                  8. The recloser control system according to claim 7, wherein the recloser controller monitors the three phases of the power line and determines a number of phases in which the line current exceeds the associated predetermined current, wherein controlling the setting of the poles is responsive to the determined number of phases in which the line current exceeds the associated predetermined current.

20                  9. The recloser control system according to claim 7, wherein the recloser controller comprises a countdown timer for determining whether a phase that has entered a pickup state should be tripped.

25                  10. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:

                          monitoring the three phases of the power line;

determining which of the three phases have an associated fault; and  
opening the phases on the power line that have the associated fault.

11. The computer-readable medium according to claim 10, wherein determining which of the three phases have an associated fault comprises comparing a line current through each of the three phases to a predetermined current, a fault occurring on one of the phases when the line current on the associated phase exceeds the predetermined current.
12. The computer-readable medium according to claim 10, wherein determining which of the three phases have an associated fault comprises:
  - 10 detecting a fault in at least one of the three phases;
  - starting a countdown timer associated with each faulted phase;
  - determining the faults still present after one of the associated countdown timers has expired.
13. The computer-readable medium according to claim 10, wherein opening the phases on the power line that have the associated fault comprises opening only one phase if only one fault is determined, the only one phase being associated with the fault, opening only two phases if only two faults are determined, the only two phases being associated with the two faults, and opening all three phases if three faults are determined.